

DOCKET NO. SA-516

APPENDIX FF

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, DC

CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE CIA AND  
TRANSCRIPT OF THE CIA BRIEFING TO THE WITNESS GROUP  
APRIL 30, 1999  
(85 Pages)

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington D C 20505

12 January 2000

Mr. James E. Hall, Chairman  
National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, SW  
Washington, DC 20594-2000


Dear Chairman Hall:

Please find enclosed a transcript of the 30 April 1999 briefing provided to the NTSB's Witness Group in connection with CIA's assistance to the FBI on the TWA Flight 800 investigation. This briefing was the result of your request to CIA earlier this year to help the Witness Group understand CIA's evaluation of witness statements. After attending the briefing and reviewing the briefing transcript, the head of the NTSB's Witness Group, Dr. David Mayer, requested that CIA release the transcript to the NTSB for placement on the public record. In an effort to assist in such an important matter, I am providing the transcript as requested.

A commercial transcription service prepared this transcript of the entire discussion that took place at the 30 April briefing. In accordance with Section 6 of the Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 and CIA disclosure policies, CIA asked the transcription service to substitute appropriate titles for the names of our employees. Similarly, we substituted a title for the name of a Missile and Space Intelligence Center employee mentioned in the discussion. The names of other attendees, however, remain in the transcript for an NTSB determination regarding their public release.

I trust that this information will be helpful and commend the difficult and hard work that the Witness Group and others have done in investigating the Flight 800 tragedy. Please let me know if CIA can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

  
David W. Carey  
Executive Director

1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
2 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
3 BRIEFING ON TWA FLIGHT 800  
4 National Transportation  
5 Safety Board  
6 490 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W.  
7 Fifth Floor Boardroom  
8 Washington, D.C.  
9  
10 Friday, April 30, 1999  
11 10:00 a.m.  
12 PRESENT:  
13 BERNARD LOEB J. DENNIS RODRIGUES  
14 DAN CAMPBELL JAMES M. WALTERS  
15 ROBERT YOUNG JOSEPH MANNO  
16 DAVID MAYER  
17  
18 ALSO PRESENT: PETER GOELZ; ERIK GROSOFF; PAUL SCLAMM;  
19 MATT FURMAN; DANA SANZO; HEATHER KNAPP AND CIA  
20 OFFICIALS  
21  
22

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1                   P R O C E E D I N G S

2                   MR. MAYER: As you all know, we've been  
3 working for quite a while to arrange this meeting and  
4 there have been a number of logistical issues to work  
5 out. Some of you folks have rearranged your  
6 schedules to be here and I greatly appreciate that.  
7 And we have some representatives from the Central  
8 Intelligence Agency who are here to talk to us today  
9 about their work for the FBI in studying the  
10 statements of the eyewitnesses, and I'll just ask you  
11 guys to introduce yourselves and go at it. If I can  
12 be of any help, just let me know.

13                  DD/CIA/OTI: Good morning. I'm the deputy  
14 director of the Office of Transnational Issues  
15 (OTI). With me today are two of my analysts who  
16 assisted the FBI with the TWA 800 crash landing, and  
17 a representative from the CIA's Office of General  
18 Counsel. Like all of you in private industry know,  
19 we don't go anywhere without our lawyer.

20                  In a moment, CIA Analyst #1 will address  
21 the CIA's analysis of the eyewitness accounts  
22 pertaining to the crash. But first, I'd like to make

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 some opening comments to provide you some background  
2 on the CIA's work and how we got involved. And  
3 nothing we're going to tell you here today is  
4 classified. Everything here will be unclassified.

5 As you're no doubt aware, there was the  
6 possibility this was caused by international  
7 terrorism, potentially one of the most lethal such  
8 acts ever perpetrated against the United States.  
9 With this in mind, the FBI requested the CIA's  
10 assistance almost immediately after the crash. As  
11 you may also know, the FBI is the lead federal agency  
12 for investigating acts of international terrorism  
13 committed inside the U.S. borders. Because  
14 international terrorism is an authorized CIA area of  
15 analysis, the CIA agreed to assist the FBI.

16 Federal investigators focused early on on  
17 three possible causes for the crash: a bomb, a  
18 missile, or mechanical failure. Because of the  
19 eyewitness accounts of something ascending and  
20 culminating in explosion, CIA missile analysts placed  
21 particular attention on the possibility that a  
22 missile was involved.

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 Over the course of our work, the FBI  
2 provided us with summaries of statements from 244  
3 people who claimed to have witnessed the crash or its  
4 aftermath.

5 These summaries did not all arrive at the  
6 same time, but were provided over a period of 14  
7 months. Some reports contained sight and sound  
8 observations and most included information that could  
9 be used to determine the location of eyewitnesses at  
10 the time of the crash. CIA analysts relied on these  
11 summaries and did not independently interview any  
12 eyewitnesses, although on one occasion they  
13 accompanied FBI special agents when the FBI  
14 reinterviewed two eyewitnesses.

15 The FBI provided us with the following  
16 National Transportation Safety Board material: two  
17 sets of radar tracking data. One was from a radar at  
18 Islip providing data sampled once every 4.6 seconds;  
19 the other was from a radar at Riverhead providing  
20 data sampled once every 12 seconds. They provided  
21 us: The precise time of -- the aircraft's location,  
22 altitude, speed and heading at the moment the CVR and

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 FDR ceased operating; A salvage map showing the  
2 approximate locations where some of the Flight 800  
3 debris were found; Meteorological data, including the  
4 winds aloft.

5           The FBI also provided us with NTSB's  
6 observations that an abrupt sound was recorded just  
7 before the CVR ceased operating, that no other  
8 unusual activity was recorded either on the CVR or  
9 the FDR, that the front third of the aircraft was  
10 believed to have separated from the fuselage, from  
11 the main fuselage, soon after the initial explosion.

12           CIA analysts also visited the aircraft  
13 reconstruction hangar at Calverton on several  
14 different occasions.

15           Additional information and tools that we  
16 obtained independently included infrared data from a  
17 military satellite; Delorme Version 4.0 Street Atlas  
18 USA mapping software to plot the relative locations  
19 of the eyewitnesses; and detailed maps of the Long  
20 Island area. Our analysis of the FBI summaries took  
21 more than a year and required more than 2000  
22 man-hours of work.

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1           Analysts went to places where the summaries  
2 of the eyewitnesses said they had been. They also  
3 visited specific vantage points of a few eyewitnesses  
4 whose summaries had given particularly detailed  
5 descriptions that included readily identifiable  
6 reference points. At several of these locations,  
7 videotape templates were made to use in our analysis  
8 and as backdrops for scenes in the video which we  
9 will show you shortly. CIA analysts first concluded  
10 that eyewitnesses had observed only the burning  
11 aircraft in various stages of crippled flight, rather  
12 than a missile attacking the aircraft, on 30 December  
13 1996. Preliminary analytic results were provided to  
14 the FBI via telephone within 24 hours of the time we  
15 made our initial conclusion.

16           Over the next 10 months we were in  
17 continuous contact with the FBI as we documented and  
18 refined our work. It took about a month for CIA  
19 analysts to vet the analysis internally and prepare a  
20 formal briefing for the FBI investigators and special  
21 agents. This briefing took place in Calverton on 6  
22 February 1997. We provided a written summary of

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550



1 CIA's analysis to FBI Assistant Director James  
2 Kallstrom on 28 March 1997. CIA analysts briefed  
3 their work to Mr. Kallstrom on 18 June 1997, and  
4 again on 22 October 1997 at his request.

5 At the conclusion of the October session,  
6 Mr. Kallstrom expressed his desire to use the CIA  
7 video "TWA Flight 800: What Did the Eyewitnesses  
8 See?" at his news conference announcing the  
9 suspension of the criminal investigation, scheduled  
10 for the following month. The CIA concurred and  
11 prepared the videotape for public release.

12 What I'd like to do now is introduce CIA  
13 Analyst #1, who was the lead analyst in our work.  
14 He's going to give you an opportunity to see the CIA  
15 video one more time, and then open up the discussion  
16 about any questions you may have concerning CIA's  
17 analysis. CIA Analyst #1.

18 CIA ANALYST #1: We'd like you to see this  
19 video one more time now. This was the primary  
20 product that we produced for the FBI that summarized  
21 our analysis and conclusions that we arrived at.

22 (Video was played.)

1           MR. MAYER:  CIA Analyst #1, it dawned on me  
2 while the video was playing that you guys introduced  
3 yourselves and I never asked the members of my group  
4 who they were.  So if you guys wouldn't mind, why  
5 don't you tell CIA Analyst #1 who you are and what  
6 organization you're with and just a little bit about  
7 your role in the investigation.

8           Go ahead, Bob.

9           MR. YOUNG:  I'm Bob Young, I'm the director  
10 of Flight Safety at TWA.

11          MR. RODRIGUES:  Dennis Rodrigues, Boeing  
12 Air Safety Accident Investigation.

13          MR. WALTERS:  I'm Jim Walters with the Air  
14 Line Pilots Association.

15          MR. MANNO:  Joseph Manno.

16          CIA ANALYST #1:  Probably the most  
17 important thing to take away from this video is that  
18 the vast majority of the eyewitnesses saw only the  
19 last 10 to 15 seconds of what took place.

20          We know from sound propagation analysis and  
21 from the radar analysis we did that the time from  
22 when the plane exploded to when it hit the water was

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 roughly 49 seconds. Therefore, if somebody described  
2 seeing something in the last 10 to 15 seconds of  
3 this, we're confident it's not a missile. They  
4 didn't see a missile destroy the aircraft.

5 We also know from the sound propagation  
6 analysis that the left wing of the plane breaks away  
7 from the plane 42 seconds after that initial  
8 explosion, and there's a lot of eyewitnesses that  
9 describe seeing two fireballs descend to the ocean  
10 and they give the rough times they think that took.  
11 They give numbers like six seconds or seven seconds.

12 Our propagation analysis tells us that took  
13 about seven seconds. It's very consistent with what  
14 these eyewitnesses saw. If an eyewitness describes  
15 something that took several seconds and culminated in  
16 an explosion which then was followed by two fireballs  
17 descending to the ocean's surface, we're very  
18 confident those eyewitnesses did not see a missile  
19 cause an explosion on the plane, which occurred 49  
20 seconds before the plane hit the water.

21 What I'd like to do here is allow you --  
22 David's told me you have a lot of questions, and

1 rather than run through a briefing that you've  
2 written all the answers -- to -- probably a more  
3 productive use of our time, if you would just ask me  
4 questions, I'll address them one at a time. I've  
5 brought some materials that I can show if I think  
6 they are directly applicable to the question you  
7 ask. Or we can just talk out the details.

8 MR. MAYER: Anybody have any questions to  
9 start off? I know over time, as we've worked  
10 together, there's been questions. I've tried to pass  
11 some on. But this is really the opportunity for you  
12 guys to ask whatever's on your mind about the  
13 videotape.

14 MR. MANNO: I've got one. I may have  
15 missed it on the tape. How many witnesses did you  
16 actually talk to?

17 CIA ANALYST #1: We didn't --

18 MR. MANNO: How many statements did you  
19 review?

20 CIA ANALYST #1: There were statements from  
21 244 eyewitnesses. Now, because of the way the FBI  
22 obtains these, we had more than 244 documents. They

1 produced something that's called 302 statements.  
2 These are summaries that the FBI produces from  
3 interviews they do. They also do condensed versions  
4 of these. And so on occasion, you'll have maybe a  
5 two-page report that's condensed down to one or two  
6 paragraphs.

7           We asked to have all the materials we  
8 possibly could have. It's much more valuable to us  
9 to have a complete 302 than it is to have just a  
10 summary of a 302. I'll give you an example of why.  
11 We needed -- in the process of finding out where  
12 these eyewitnesses are, we need to know where they're  
13 standing. And sometimes the statement would be,  
14 well, "I was standing in my backyard." Well, you  
15 need to know where the backyard is. We could take  
16 the Delorme mapping software and give it an address,  
17 we could plot it on the computer screen and then do a  
18 calculation of how far that eyewitness was from where  
19 the plane was when it exploded. Now the location of  
20 the plane is based on the radar tracking data plus  
21 the on-board recordings that were made before the  
22 power was lost on the plane.

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1           MR. WALTERS: Of those 244 there was a  
2 statement in the tape that -- about 200 were used  
3 later as a -- kind of to verify what you already  
4 had. Is it fair to say that you started with a much  
5 smaller core group of witnesses that you used  
6 initially?

7           CIA ANALYST #1: Because of the way the FBI  
8 provided data to us, we didn't get all 244, we didn't  
9 get reports from all 244 eyewitnesses at once in the  
10 beginning. We got them slowly over a period of  
11 really about 10 months. We started out very early on  
12 with probably 30 or 40 reports. I think as we  
13 started to make progress, the FBI was willing to give  
14 us more information and they were tending initially  
15 to give us reports that looked like they may be  
16 descriptions from somebody who had seen a missile --  
17 flare or fireworks descriptions.

18           Now it turns out some of the most valuable  
19 reports for our analysis were witnesses who clearly  
20 did not see a missile. Didn't think they had seen a  
21 missile, didn't even think they had seen a flare or  
22 firework. They saw the fireball falling to the

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 surface of the ocean.

2           One really good witness in that group said  
3 he saw the fireball hit the surface of the water and  
4 then simultaneously, almost simultaneously heard the  
5 sound of the explosion. That allowed us to go back  
6 and calculate how long it took from the initial  
7 explosion to when the plane hit the water, even  
8 though that particular eyewitness clearly didn't see  
9 anything even near to the time the plane exploded.

10           There are eyewitnesses, even after the  
11 fact, after this analysis came out, who thought that  
12 their descriptions had been discounted by us because  
13 they said "I didn't hear sound, how could CIA have  
14 used our work if I didn't hear sound?" What you can  
15 do is you can map their description into other  
16 eyewitnesses whose timing we could specify, and if  
17 they're consistent, they then add to the story.

18           And that's pretty much what happened.

19           MR. WALTERS: The loud -- the very loud  
20 explosion that a lot of this is based on, my limited  
21 experience with fuel air explosions and my experience  
22 over at Grumman Airplane, I'm not sure that I

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 personally would think that the loudest explosion  
2 would have been the initial event, that indeed it  
3 might have been something later on in the sequence.  
4 And I'm curious how that was approached, if that  
5 indeed was part of your consideration.

6           CIA ANALYST #1: Let me explain how that  
7 would affect the analysis. Although I am confident  
8 that the center fuel tank explosion was the source of  
9 that very loud sound, let's temporarily assume that  
10 that sound was made later by something else that  
11 exploded on the plane or near the plane.

12           MR. WALTERS: Or a structural breakup.

13           CIA ANALYST #1: Or a structural breakup.

14           Now, it's a very loud sound. It shook a  
15 70-ton bridge 11 miles away. But if that sound was  
16 made later, the effect it would have on our analysis  
17 is that the plane -- the time from the initial  
18 explosion to the time that the plane hit the water --  
19 would be greater than 49 seconds and what that would  
20 mean is that somebody who thinks they may have seen a  
21 missile destroy the aircraft would see something that  
22 occurred even earlier than 49 seconds before the



1 plane hit the water. So in that respect, it would  
2 make our conclusion even stronger. Let's go the  
3 other way.

4 MR. LOEB: For example, if the sound they  
5 heard was the left wing coming apart and the huge  
6 eruption, then you've got even more than the 49  
7 seconds prior to, and the events that occurred all  
8 occurred in -- even more subsequent to the initial  
9 thing. So --

10 MR. WALTERS: Right, and while it might not  
11 have much of a bearing on whether or not it was a  
12 missile, it could have more bearing on trajectory  
13 analysis of what the airplane was actually doing at  
14 the initial event. You see what I'm saying, timing  
15 is a big issue not just for missiles but for what  
16 actually is occurring as the airplane is having an  
17 event take place on board.

18 CIA ANALYST #1: That's true. Now our  
19 primary goal, as you're aware here, was to address  
20 the question "What did the eyewitnesses see?"

21 MR. WALTERS: Yes.

22 CIA ANALYST #1: And in particular, could

1 they have seen a missile destroy the aircraft.

2 MR. WALTERS: Yes.

3 CIA ANALYST #1: Although through the  
4 process of our analysis we actually were able to  
5 reconstruct a pretty good feel for what generally  
6 happened to the plane from the time of the initial  
7 explosion to when it hit the water, and we animated  
8 that here, that's not central to our conclusion that  
9 the eyewitnesses did not see a missile destroy the  
10 plane.

11 MR. WALTERS: I understand.

12 CIA ANALYST #1: While we're on it, let's  
13 address another question in terms of the sound  
14 propagation analysis. What if somehow that explosion  
15 occurred earlier? Because if it occurred much  
16 earlier, and it was near the plane, now the sound  
17 could arrive at the eyewitnesses as the plane's  
18 hitting the water and the time between when the plane  
19 exploded and when it hit the water could be shorter.

20 The reason we don't think that happened is  
21 if you had a sound that was loud enough to shake a  
22 70-ton bridge 11 miles away, and it occurred near the

1 aircraft, we would think that that sound would be  
2 recorded on the recorders, probably on both the  
3 cockpit voice recorder and the data recorder. It  
4 would shake the plane. So we don't think that  
5 happened. Now there are other reasons I won't go  
6 into, there are a lot of other reasons for thinking  
7 that didn't happen in terms of the description of the  
8 sound as it's heard up and down the beach, up and  
9 down Long Island --

10 MR. WALTERS: The quality of the sound, you  
11 mean?

12 CIA ANALYST #1: Not the quality, but the  
13 timing. What we can do it's kind of interesting, as  
14 people are describing what they're seeing. This one  
15 witness I mentioned earlier was relatively close to  
16 the plane compared to some of the other  
17 eyewitnesses. You go down the beach, some of the  
18 witnesses that were further away describe the same  
19 thing. They describe the two fireballs coming down  
20 and then they describe the sound arriving later.

21 In one case, one eyewitness described  
22 actually counting the seconds. She counted seconds.

1 She said, "the plane hit the water and I counted  
2 about four seconds and then I heard the sound."  
3 She's playing this back in her mind. And the  
4 distance was consistent, as we moved down the beach,  
5 was consistent with the different arrival times of  
6 the sound as it was reported by the eyewitnesses.

7 Now you don't expect those descriptions to  
8 be correct to within a second or two, but in general  
9 the sound propagation made sense. The ones we trust  
10 the most are ones where somebody says, "I saw  
11 something and I heard something almost  
12 simultaneously." That happened, for example, with  
13 the eyewitness who was on a boat, who described  
14 seeing a flare-like object and then realized what he  
15 was seeing was an airplane. And he actually saw a  
16 wing detach. He described it. This is in an  
17 eyewitness report. That report was made before the  
18 work was done by the NTSB that said that indeed a  
19 wing had detached. So we placed a fair amount of  
20 faith in that eyewitness.

21 A very loud sound occurred right as that  
22 detachment occurred. That told us -- we know where

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 that witness was -- told us that it was 42 seconds  
2 from when the plane exploded to when that wing  
3 detached. That was very important because a lot of  
4 other eyewitnesses didn't realize it was a wing  
5 detaching. They just saw the two fireballs. We  
6 could now describe, we could now map these  
7 eyewitnesses into the earlier descriptions. That, by  
8 the way, includes the helicopter pilot, who I believe  
9 has gone on record saying he was afraid that maybe  
10 his description wasn't used as much as it should have  
11 been. We did use his description. He described the  
12 same fireball that we think was described by some of  
13 the other witnesses.

14 MR. RODRIGUES: You said that the loud  
15 explosion you heard was -- you were confident you  
16 said that the loud explosion you heard was the center  
17 tank that resulted in shaking the bridge. The  
18 problem I'm having a little bit is the center tank  
19 explosion is categorized as a low-order explosion,  
20 would it still emit a sound, a loud sound given a  
21 low-order explosion, whatever a "low-order explosion"  
22 means, from the structural breakup, that's the

1 conclusion we've arrived at.

2           CIA ANALYST #1: Our reason for concluding  
3 that -- for thinking that the loud sound was produced  
4 by the center fuel tank exploding -- is that it's a  
5 confined tank with fumes in it. If you're going to  
6 have a loud explosion associated with the plane, near  
7 the plane, you ask yourself, "What could have  
8 produced that sound?" We've heard speculation,  
9 things like well, a missile warhead. Not nearly loud  
10 enough to do that sort of thing. It wouldn't be  
11 relevant here because we're dealing with what the  
12 eyewitnesses saw. We're trying to -- we're placing  
13 what they saw later. But in terms of producing the  
14 sound, it seemed to us that this was the only way to  
15 get a sound that loud.

16           Now we were aware that there is contention,  
17 some people saying that that sound could have been  
18 made by the fuel tank exploding, others saying that  
19 it maybe wasn't. There are also, there are  
20 eyewitnesses who report hearing several sounds, not  
21 just one sound. They hear a loud sound followed by  
22 several other sounds. There's two ways that could

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 happen. You could have another source for additional  
2 sounds, and we had speculated that possibly the  
3 engines stalling could produce those sounds. They  
4 produce loud sounds but not as loud, certainly not as  
5 loud as the sound it would take to shake a 70-ton  
6 bridge 11 miles away.

7 MR. WALTERS: On that same issue, that  
8 70-ton bridge, that's a very good witness and that  
9 was an important thing too. What surprises me is  
10 there was a number of other witnesses in the same  
11 general area that don't recall a particularly loud  
12 sound. And maybe that's typical, but it seems kind  
13 of hard to justify.

14 CIA ANALYST #1: We were concerned about  
15 that a little bit. One of the things we -- Now,  
16 there are a lot of eyewitnesses that reported hearing  
17 a loud sound. They even describe it as a concussion  
18 sound. If you look up and down the beach, the  
19 witnesses that tend to hear the sounds tend to be  
20 more easterly. If you go west an equal distance from  
21 where the plane was when it exploded, those witnesses  
22 don't hear sound. So for whatever reason, the sound

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 appeared to have propagated forward.

2 But there's also another explanation. We  
3 did find a few eyewitnesses who were relatively near  
4 eyewitnesses that heard sounds that didn't report  
5 hearing sounds. They were right on the beach, and we  
6 actually went down to the beach and when you're  
7 standing on the beach you realize that this may have  
8 occurred: You're getting waves breaking and as a wave  
9 breaks, if you're standing right near the wave, it  
10 could obscure a sound. The timing of the waves could  
11 be such that literally you could have a person  
12 hearing a wave break right as that sound arrives.  
13 And somebody else down the beach, the waves break and  
14 they would hear that sound in between.

15 MR. YOUNG: Could I ask you a quick  
16 question. I think in the literature that I've read,  
17 to produce the kinds of sound we're talking about,  
18 would be a minimum of a thousand pounds of TNT at  
19 that many miles. I don't see how we could get a  
20 center tank to make that sound.

21 In any case, I'm certainly no expert on it  
22 but looking at some of the literature, the question I



1 have is one of the witnesses that you used, I believe  
2 in your summary was the Eastwind Airlines captain.  
3 We also had an opportunity, thanks to the board, to  
4 talk with him and he indicated to us that he watched  
5 the airplane for a significant period of time prior  
6 to the event occurring. He described the event as an  
7 expanding fireball. We asked him at that time  
8 whether he saw anything associated with the airplane  
9 ascend from that fireball, which of course it would  
10 have had -- he would have had to see if the airplane  
11 boost up and he told us he did not see anything. And  
12 he was between 15 and 19 miles -- looking right at it  
13 and -- above it, and I think that should finish. If  
14 it had ascended, certainly he would have been  
15 concerned because it would have ascended right  
16 through his altitude.

17 CIA ANALYST #1: Based on our analysis of  
18 the 302 information from that eyewitness, we think  
19 the fireball that he's describing is -- I believe he  
20 describes, he describes two separate fireballs.  
21 Again, he's one of these eyewitnesses that is seeing,  
22 at that point, describing what's happening near the

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 end. Now, he also described seeing a light earlier  
2 that leads into the fireball. I think what he is  
3 seeing is possibly originally a light on the plane  
4 itself but at the point at which the front of the  
5 plane comes off I think what he is seeing is what  
6 some of the other early eyewitnesses see, which is a  
7 white light, not from the plane (from the plane's  
8 lights) but a fire trailing from the plane. And I  
9 think that leads into a fireball which then descends  
10 to the ocean's surface.

11 MR. YOUNG: Would you characterize then a  
12 fire from the airplane, probably with whatever  
13 residual fuel was available, to be a white light?

14 CIA ANALYST #1: I'm not qualified to  
15 characterize what color the light would be. The  
16 eyewitnesses described the light as white very  
17 often. Others described it as whitish orange. We  
18 didn't put a lot of emphasis on the precise colors  
19 they were using to describe the light. We tried to  
20 get a sense of how early they were seeing it.

21 Now, a very important point I think to make  
22 here is that there may be only one ground-based

1 eyewitness who saw the light right after the plane  
2 exploded. That's the eyewitness who was on the  
3 bridge. The reason I say that is he gave us  
4 reference points we could deal with. He described  
5 two houses, one house above which the white light  
6 first appeared. He then said he saw the light, I  
7 think he used the phrase "zigzag" for about 15  
8 seconds, disappear for two to three seconds, and then  
9 he sees a fireball in the sky. The fireball then  
10 comes down and falls behind a different house. Now  
11 we were able to go to where this eyewitness was  
12 standing. We actually made a template, which is the  
13 one we used in the video. When you see those two  
14 houses, that's right where we think he was standing.  
15 We had a camera right at the height that he would be  
16 seeing this at.

17           We can take the radar data, we know where  
18 the plane was when it exploded. It's where he said  
19 that white light first appeared. We know where the  
20 plane hit the water. It's where he said the fireball  
21 fell down behind that other house. That made us very  
22 confident that he was seeing just the plane. Now

1 when we looked at that, when we started doing that  
2 analysis, we didn't have any preconceived notions of  
3 what we were looking at. We thought perhaps if this  
4 was an eyewitness who was going to be describing a  
5 missile, we would be able to use those reference  
6 points to determine perhaps where the missile was  
7 launched from.

8           It was in the process of doing that  
9 analysis that we realized this key eyewitness  
10 probably saw only the airplane in various stages of  
11 destruction rather than a missile attacking the  
12 plane.

13           MR. YOUNG: Well, I guess, CIA Analyst #1,  
14 the question I have still from our speaking with this  
15 one gentleman was he was leveling his airplane at  
16 16,000, now ours was about 137 or 8, your analysis  
17 has it zooming to above his altitude. And he's  
18 closing at a rather rapid rate, I mean, even if the  
19 747 is stopped and it was just falling down, and he  
20 indicated to us that he saw nothing, and he would be  
21 looking at about 400,000 pounds of airplane and  
22 whatever zooming up to about a thousand feet above

1 his altitude, I think that he would have noticed it.  
2 We asked him specifically and he said that as far as  
3 he was concerned nothing of a large magnitude came  
4 out of the top of the fireball. So that's the reason  
5 I had that question.

6 CIA ANALYST #1: He was about, I believe,  
7 his estimate was 15 to 20 miles away. He was further  
8 away than a lot of the other eyewitnesses but perhaps  
9 an advantage he had is that he's at a different  
10 view. Like I say, we took the description that we  
11 had in the 302 the FBI provided us, we took that very  
12 seriously, we analyzed it along with the other  
13 descriptions.

14 Go back to something else here in terms of  
15 how high that plane went after the initial  
16 explosion. We had an aerodynamicist, an engineer  
17 who's very experienced. He's a pilot and he also  
18 built his own airplane. Took him about eight years.  
19 He was working with several aerodynamicists at Boeing  
20 as he proceeded through this analysis. We were  
21 trying to match aerodynamic information along with  
22 radar information that we had and come up with an

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 estimate of what the plane did. And we were doing  
2 this so we could try to get a sense of what the  
3 eyewitnesses may have seen.

4           It's a very important point that it's not  
5 critical precisely how high that plane went. I think  
6 the news media have suggested the plane exploded and  
7 zoomed up and this is what the eyewitnesses saw. We  
8 know that the vast majority of eyewitnesses did not  
9 see things happening near the beginning. Even if the  
10 plane went up several thousand feet, on the ground  
11 there's maybe one eyewitness that saw that, this guy  
12 on the bridge.

13           I think there's a reason for that. If you  
14 read his description carefully, they're working on  
15 this bridge and there's a number of them. There's  
16 like four and there's a control room for the bridge  
17 and they're down in that room. He wanders up to take  
18 a break. And he's standing in an area on the bridge  
19 and he's looking out in the direction where this  
20 light appears in the sky. He had a reason to be  
21 looking in that direction. Just relaxing and  
22 looking. A lot of other people are on the beach,

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 they're talking to each other. Their attention is  
2 first drawn to this when they see a bright fireball.

3           What he is seeing is a very faint light.  
4 In his description, it's a pinpoint of white light  
5 zigzagging up. I think it would be very possible...  
6 this is occurring right at sunset, right as the sun  
7 is setting. It's relatively light out. I think it's  
8 very reasonable that very few people would be  
9 expected to see this happen right from the beginning  
10 unless they are looking in that part of the sky.

11           MR. RODRIGUES: The video shows, or the  
12 video in effect says that what the eyewitnesses saw  
13 was the crippled airplane, after the nose comes off,  
14 climbing. So that's the streak of light that they're  
15 reporting. As an eyewitness --

16           CIA ANALYST #1: That is something that a  
17 few eyewitnesses saw. The guy on the bridge saw  
18 that. We suspect the individual on the USAir flight  
19 looking down saw that, saw it at the beginning. And  
20 there's another eyewitness we didn't refer to in the  
21 video who described seeing a light go up and over.  
22 She described it to appear like a roller coaster, the

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 motion of a roller coaster. We think that she may  
2 have seen it.

3           The vast majority of eyewitnesses who  
4 describe something that they think may be ascending  
5 in the sky culminating in the fireball, and then two  
6 pieces falling to the ocean, we are confident that  
7 those people saw things occurring at the end and not  
8 at the beginning, regardless of what happened to the  
9 plane in the first five or 10 seconds after it  
10 exploded.

11           MR. WALTERS: When you say "at the end" you  
12 mean after -- what do you mean at the end?

13           CIA ANALYST #1: By "the end," I mean  
14 within -- as we say in the video, within the last 10  
15 to 15 seconds before the plane hit the water. So out  
16 of this 49-second period from when the plane  
17 initially exploded to when it hit the water, most  
18 eyewitnesses are only seeing things that occur within  
19 the last 10 to 15 seconds of that 49-second period.

20           MR. WALTERS: And not the actual --  
21 whatever is happening on the airplane prior to the  
22 first fireball set, at the top of the arch when it



1 starts to come down?

2 CIA ANALYST #1: That's correct. Even that  
3 fireball, which is a smaller fireball, I think that  
4 produces, that's -- The beginning of the streak in  
5 the sky, what most people describe as a streak, is  
6 that fireball. The one that occurs near the point at  
7 which the plane is at its maximum altitude.

8 MR. WALTERS: That's significantly  
9 different than what our review of the witness  
10 statements leads us to believe. By our count, I  
11 think we have something like 260 what we call "streak  
12 of light witnesses," which is what we determined a  
13 witness who saw something after the initial event but  
14 before the first "fireball" as being something on the  
15 airplane that's emitting strong light.

16 CIA ANALYST #1: How do you determine in  
17 your analysis what portion of the final disaster  
18 they're seeing? In other words, what portion of that  
19 49-second period they're seeing?

20 MR. MAYER: I don't know that we've  
21 actually determined analytically what portion of the  
22 analysis they've seen. But we did reach an

1 agreement, and I don't have it in front of me, on  
2 what a streak of light is, because a number of  
3 witnesses, as you know, report seeing something they  
4 described that was firework-like or that looked like  
5 a point of light or fairly concentrated light in the  
6 sky.

7                   Generally, they described it as rising.  
8 Many of them saw it for a very brief period of time,  
9 five to 10 seconds. And in our reading of the  
10 witness statements, we, as a group, identified those  
11 witnesses who met a much tighter definition of streak  
12 of light than I can resurrect from my memory right  
13 this minute.

14                   And that number was -- do you actually have  
15 the number, Jim?

16                   MR. WALTERS: In my notes I have 260,  
17 having gone through and verified what we call the  
18 streak of light, it may not be exact.

19                   MR. LOEB: Have you done a time distance  
20 study on any of those?

21                   MR. MAYER: We're in the process. Heather  
22 has gotten terribly familiar with Delorme Street

1 Mapper and things determining these witnesses. We're  
2 almost finished with that. I don't know that the  
3 group has necessarily determined in an analytic sense  
4 that the streak of light witnesses are necessarily  
5 seeing things right at the beginning of the event,  
6 but certainly the way their statements tend to  
7 characterize it is that's where their observations  
8 began, I think generally.

9 MR. YOUNG: And CIA Analyst #1, we've had  
10 access to 755 witness statements versus your 244.

11 CIA ANALYST #1: Right.

12 MR. YOUNG: We do have a fair amount of  
13 people that characterize the light. You've mentioned  
14 that you have an aerodynamics person that was on the  
15 analysis team and is a pilot. Is there anybody on  
16 your team that had experience with large aircraft of  
17 this size?

18 CIA ANALYST #1: Well, if we include on our  
19 team the Boeing people we were consulting with, yes.

20 MR. YOUNG: Okay, because I think part of  
21 your analysis, the airplane remains wings level. As  
22 it pitches up and at the very top we see the engines'

1 compressors stalling for effect, I guess,  
2 symmetrically, which was nice of them to do that. It  
3 turns out that this particular engine has a huge  
4 appetite for fuel and it would be at climb power at  
5 the time. And we found out unfortunately in normal  
6 operations that without what we call positive  
7 pressure to the engines, that they tend to flame out  
8 very rapidly. And of course, with the nose off the  
9 airplane there would be no power to the electrical  
10 boost pumps to provide that positive pressure to the  
11 engines. So it's our -- at least, assumption, that  
12 probably those engines were not producing power after  
13 17,000 feet.

14               So I guess my question is, if you were  
15 using the engines as developing that climb power up  
16 to that altitude, I'm curious about why that  
17 assumption was made.

18               CIA ANALYST #1: I asked our aerodynamicist  
19 to do a run, do a simulation where he cut off the  
20 engines within a few seconds of when the plane  
21 exploded and see if it had enough momentum and lift  
22 to produce a trajectory that would be close to what

1 we thought the eyewitnesses may have seen with our  
2 original trajectory, and the answer came back yes.

3           So you don't have to have the engines  
4 running to have the plane appear in a way that it  
5 would have for those early eyewitnesses, and again, I  
6 repeat there's only a few of them. This isn't going  
7 to explain the vast majority that you're worried  
8 about, if you're worried about the streaks that  
9 hundreds of people have seen. We think those people  
10 have seen things near the end. But aerodynamically,  
11 the plane can ascend without power according to our  
12 aerodynamic model.

13           MR. YOUNG: And I guess the other question  
14 I have, too. Swept wing airplanes tend to be  
15 generally unstable and once you lose 100,000 pounds  
16 or so off the nose, obviously he was using the shift  
17 of center of gravity, but I'm concerned of why he  
18 would assume that the wings would remain level in  
19 that situation. Because that's key to the airplane  
20 being able to ascend. And again, our witness at the  
21 15 or so miles said that the airplane turned and fell  
22 off to one side.

1                   CIA ANALYST #1: When you say the witness  
2 who saw the airplane turn and fall to one side, is  
3 this the gentleman on the boat?

4                   MR. YOUNG: No, this is the gentleman on  
5 the Eastwind airplane, the captain. He indicated,  
6 again, that he never saw any ascension, and as I say,  
7 he would only have been leveling at 16,000 feet.

8                   CIA ANALYST #1: It was my understanding,  
9 based on the 302 information we had, that the pilot  
10 never reported seeing the plane. He only saw a light  
11 which --

12                  MR. YOUNG: We asked him to -- specifically  
13 and he said he never could identify any part of the  
14 airplane until after the explosion and then he did  
15 see parts of the airplane.

16                  CIA ANALYST #1: He actually claims to have  
17 seen pieces of the airplane rather than fire?

18                  MR. YOUNG: He said two pieces followed by  
19 a trail of fire.

20                  MR. MAYER: I think the salient point of  
21 what he is saying is the trail of fire, though. I  
22 don't remember that he's specifically saying that we

1 don't have a -- I don't believe that he's saying that  
2 he saw the wings. If I recall correctly, he saw a  
3 trail of flames that he believed to be the wings; I  
4 don't believe he ever actually --

5 MR. YOUNG: He said two pieces of the  
6 airplane trailing fire that he assumed was the wings.

7 MR. RODRIGUES: But trailing fire down.

8 CIA ANALYST #1: If he said he saw trailing  
9 fire, this is consistent with the information we had  
10 earlier, which was that he saw fire, but never  
11 specifically referred to seeing a part of the  
12 airplane itself. And that didn't surprise us because  
13 of how far away he was. If he's 15 to 20 miles away,  
14 witnesses that were even closer never reported seeing  
15 the plane itself. They reported seeing lights in the  
16 sky.

17 Now again, I would emphasize as soon as any  
18 eyewitness starts talking about two fireballs  
19 descending to the ocean's surface we get very, very,  
20 very confident that what they are describing from  
21 that point on is the last seven or so seconds of the  
22 disaster before the plane hits the water.

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1           It's one of the most consistent things that  
2 we see among all the eyewitnesses that we've looked  
3 at.

4           MR. MAYER: We would probably agree with  
5 that because we've certainly seen a number of  
6 statements that talk about seeing a fireball, or two  
7 fireballs fall down into the ocean.

8           We've been going at this for about an  
9 hour. Do you want to take just a very rapid break  
10 perhaps?

11          MR. LOEB: I think before you do that, you  
12 see if they have any additional questions.

13          MR. MAYER: What do you think, guys?

14          MR. RODRIGUES: I don't need a break.

15          MR. WALTERS: I'm fine. I'd like to keep  
16 going.

17          MR. MANNO: I want to bring up one point  
18 during our interview with Captain McClaine. I think  
19 he said he saw the point of the white light and  
20 followed it all the way off and on right up to the  
21 explosion event. It was enveloped by the explosion,  
22 which kind of left us wondering about the power on



1 the airplane and things like that. Because if the  
2 assumption is that's the landing light, that means  
3 there's power on the airplane.

4 CIA ANALYST #1: You're correct. Either  
5 there's power on the airplane and it's a landing  
6 light which is on all the way until the plane breaks  
7 apart. Or a landing light that he has seen earlier  
8 fades into a small fire and he cannot discriminate  
9 one from the other. You're absolutely correct.

10 MR. MANNO: That's something you looked  
11 at?

12 CIA ANALYST #1: It didn't affect our  
13 analysis in the sense that the description that he  
14 gave of multiple fireballs descending to the surface  
15 was consistent with other eyewitnesses. Other  
16 eyewitnesses described a light that they saw in the  
17 sky earlier.

18 MR. MANNO: I think we came away with the  
19 feeling that he was looking at a landing light. It  
20 was something on the aircraft. I'm just surprised  
21 that he said it stayed there right to the explosion  
22 and right after the fireball.

1 MR. RODRIGUES: Going back to the video  
2 again, showing the airplane climbing and leaving a  
3 trail of light is what the witnesses saw. In your  
4 analysis, you've put a witness on the beach --

5 CIA ANALYST #1: Again, I need to clarify  
6 something here. When you say what the eyewitnesses  
7 saw, there's one ground-based eyewitness that would  
8 have seen -- that we believe saw the event that  
9 early.

10 MR. RODRIGUES: Okay. I guess, I keep  
11 getting hung up on that and you keep correcting me.

12 MR. YOUNG: Well, one eyewitness that  
13 you've seen. We've seen a lot more than you have.

14 MR. RODRIGUES: The video presents it in  
15 such a way it leaves the viewer as thinking a  
16 composite of the eyewitnesses who saw an early event  
17 saw this (indicating). If it's only one or two, then  
18 it's not representative of all of them but that's  
19 okay. Let's just say it's one witness who saw this.  
20 That's fine. The one witness who saw it from where  
21 he was standing if he looked out to where it  
22 occurred, the nose comes off, the airplane climbs, we

1 agreed it will climb. What does your analysis show  
2 as far as the angle goes? I mean, what would he  
3 see?

4 CIA ANALYST #1: A very, very good  
5 question. The angle of the light that he sees in the  
6 sky, the ascent rate of that angle is somewhat driven  
7 by the fact that the plane is approaching him. I'll  
8 give you an example of this; if you're looking at an  
9 airplane flying directly towards you in absolutely  
10 level flight, it will appear to be ascending in the  
11 sky, because the angle of your sight to -- the line  
12 of sight to the plane is increasing as the plane  
13 approaches you.

14 Flight 800 was flying at an oblique angle  
15 to this eyewitness but generally approaching him. So  
16 there's some ascent that he would see even if the  
17 plane had exploded and continued to fly level. Now  
18 to explain the magnitude of the ascent that he  
19 described as well as to hit the radar points that we  
20 had -- because we have more than just his  
21 description, we have radar data -- to do both of  
22 those, we had the plane ascend somewhat after the

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 initial explosion. That seemed to be consistent with  
2 the front of the airplane coming off. But again, the  
3 magnitude of that ascent isn't directly proportional  
4 to what he sees in the sky. I think that's a very  
5 important point to make.

6 MR. RODRIGUES: Yeah, I was trying to  
7 quantify that. If it's the one witness who is used  
8 to derive that view, what did he see in terms of a  
9 streak, you know, how much of an ascent was it  
10 compared to the witnesses that we're reading. I'm  
11 trying to balance that out or make a connection  
12 there.

13 CIA ANALYST #1: The reason we could use  
14 that eyewitness in the video is that we had a  
15 template which contained the houses along the beach  
16 that he used as reference points to what he was  
17 seeing. And as a backdrop, we have radar data. We  
18 could use the radar data, knowing where he was  
19 standing, knowing where the houses are, to say,  
20 "Where was the plane?" The plane is right over that  
21 first house when it first explodes. We then have  
22 radar data to derive the trajectory.

1           And we know where the plane was when it hit  
2 the water. It's behind that second house. That's  
3 how we produced that part of the video. We used the  
4 radar data along with the aerodynamic modeling and  
5 his general description. We never go to a -- we  
6 never take an eyewitness report and try to derive a  
7 trajectory directly from what the eyewitness is  
8 saying because they're giving estimates. In his  
9 particular case, because he gave us some very good  
10 reference points, he was an excellent witness.

11           If somebody -- for instance, if a witness  
12 says "I saw something ascending at a steep angle in  
13 the sky," you can't use a story like that to get a  
14 quantitative estimate of what the plane did.

15           MR. RODRIGUES: You weren't able to look at  
16 other witnesses who were in positions that would give  
17 you similar references, other people who might be  
18 more closer to a 90-degree angle, for example,  
19 through the flight path out there?

20           CIA ANALYST #1: Most of the good  
21 eyewitnesses, not surprisingly, are on the beach.  
22 They're along the beach, and this occurred out over

1 the ocean. So you have no references other than the  
2 horizon. And even the precision of that horizon is  
3 in question, how precisely a witness can see the  
4 horizon at that hour of the day. But what we need to  
5 do comparisons with the radar data is knowledge of  
6 where the eyewitness is, and then where known  
7 references are with respect to the fire that the  
8 witness is describing.

9 MR. RODRIGUES: The difficulty I'm having  
10 is a lot of the eyewitnesses, and we only read these  
11 in the last few months, long after the video came  
12 out, is quite a few eyewitnesses are talking about  
13 something going straight up. And we try to capture  
14 those that occurred or reported before an explosion  
15 was seen. Or that's all they reported whatever. And  
16 I'm trying to relate angles with various people,  
17 various locations. And if this was really made  
18 focusing on one individual that had a -- really good  
19 reference points then, of course, it doesn't include  
20 other people who were also reporting the same,  
21 something going straight up -- maybe they didn't have  
22 references like you said -- and try to get some

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 understanding really of what they're seeing. You  
2 know, what phase of that.

3 CIA ANALYST #1: The reason it wasn't  
4 important to us to understand what a lot of  
5 eyewitnesses who reported seeing things going up --  
6 wasn't important for us to know what they had seen,  
7 is we could establish that they saw things that took  
8 place 10 to 15 seconds before the plane hit the  
9 water.

10 MR. RODRIGUES: How do you establish that,  
11 the sound?

12 CIA ANALYST #1: By the sound propagation  
13 analysis, and in particular, by the inclusion in a  
14 lot of these eyewitnesses' descriptions of two  
15 fireballs descending to the ocean's surface.

16 MR. RODRIGUES: Yeah.

17 CIA ANALYST #1: We know that the  
18 two-fireball separation takes place about seven  
19 seconds before the plane hits the water. Now I  
20 should ask this question here: Is there any  
21 skepticism or doubt about the analysis that  
22 establishes that it was about 49 seconds from when

1 the plane initially exploded to when it hit the  
2 water? And likewise, that it's about 42 seconds from  
3 when the plane explodes to when the left wing  
4 detaches?

5 MR. WALTERS: Let me answer that with a  
6 question. There's an event before the left wing  
7 separates.

8 CIA ANALYST #1: Right.

9 MR. WALTERS: There's what we call the  
10 initial fireball, which is the first highly visible  
11 fireball in the sky. It has nothing to do with the  
12 streak of light. But it's prior to the wing coming  
13 off and the airplane separating. What is your  
14 estimation of the initial event, the center tank  
15 explosion, to the first fireball? What's the length  
16 of time on that?

17 CIA ANALYST #1: Good question. We've  
18 animated that here to be about 18 seconds. That is a  
19 real estimate. There's no sound propagation analysis  
20 that lets you establish when that fireball occurred.  
21 It's driven largely by the one ground-based  
22 eyewitness who gave us reference points and described



1 seeing a white light ascend for about 15 seconds,  
2 then disappear for two to three seconds, and then in  
3 that portion of the sky a small fireball appears.

4           We don't think that is the fireball that a  
5 lot of the other eyewitnesses are describing, which  
6 is a big fireball which almost immediately produces  
7 two trails of fire falling to the water's surface.  
8 Something else I guess I should say here. We think  
9 it's reasonable, considering how dramatic this was,  
10 that it's unlikely that somebody would look at this  
11 in the sky, watch it for a while and then look away  
12 and do something else. So a number that was very  
13 valuable for us to have is: "How long was it from  
14 when you first observed something in the sky until  
15 the time at which you lost sight of it, whether  
16 it's -- because it fell to the ocean's surface, or if  
17 you're further inland, because it fell down behind  
18 some trees or behind a house?"

19           It's reasonable that these people, once  
20 they started seeing this, continued watching it. So  
21 you get a good sense of what they're seeing by asking  
22 them, "How long was your total observation?" Now

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 unfortunately, we didn't have an opportunity to go  
2 back and do that. We were relying on the 302 reports  
3 that we had. And in several cases, those total  
4 estimates are made in those reports. In other cases,  
5 although they don't say how long their observations  
6 lasted, they do describe the two fireballs falling to  
7 the ocean's surface and we established that those --  
8 that time duration was about seven seconds.

9 MR. RODRIGUES: People have different  
10 perceptions of time obviously. We all do. Did you  
11 run an extreme to see what the differences would be  
12 in terms of how long the explosion?

13 CIA ANALYST #1: We did this, we asked  
14 ourself this question. We played devil's advocate.  
15 Said let's temporarily assume that these eyewitnesses  
16 are seeing a missile which streaks toward the plane  
17 and causes the initial explosion. What is the total  
18 duration of their observation? How much of this must  
19 they have seen if they then continue to follow it all  
20 the way down to the time at which the fireballs hit  
21 the ocean? What it has to be is 49 seconds plus the  
22 additional time of the streak that they're seeing

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 leading up to the initial explosion, if they're  
2 seeing a missile go from the ocean's surface.

3 CIA Analyst #2 who does analysis on that  
4 sort of thing had an estimate. What was your  
5 estimate of how long it would take?

6 CIA ANALYST #2: It would take 10 to 15,  
7 depending whether they were directly below or off to  
8 the side, 10 seconds.

9 CIA ANALYST #1: So we're looking at 49  
10 plus 10, maybe about a minute of looking, a minute of  
11 observation. If you go back to the witnesses we're  
12 describing, they don't appear to be that long with  
13 the one exception of this witness on the bridge who  
14 describes a fairly long ascent. And then we also  
15 have an additional check on him because we know where  
16 the light is when he first sees it and where the  
17 fireball is when he loses sight of it. We have an  
18 azimuth over where his observations took place. So  
19 we're confident that he saw an awful lot of this,  
20 whereas we think the other eyewitnesses -- many of  
21 the other eyewitnesses saw only the last 10 to 15  
22 seconds.

1 MR. RODRIGUES: Was he the one that said he  
2 saw a white light zigzag? Or somebody said that. Is  
3 that the one that reported it?

4 CIA ANALYST #1: He says he sees --

5 MR. RODRIGUES: White light zigzag, rising.

6 CIA ANALYST #1: That's correct.

7 MR. RODRIGUES: Was the person on the  
8 bridge the person that said that?

9 CIA ANALYST #1: Yes. He also --

10 MR. RODRIGUES: Let me interrupt a second.

11 CIA ANALYST #1: Sure, sure.

12 MR. RODRIGUES: The airplane in crippled  
13 flight, I have a problem understanding how it would  
14 zigzag. You know, if it's rolling, with the wing it  
15 would turn one way or the other. It's going to  
16 probably --

17 CIA ANALYST #1: He said the light is  
18 zigzagging or twinkling. I'm not convinced that that  
19 necessarily reflects precisely what the plane is  
20 doing or why the light appears to look that way to  
21 him.

22 MR. RODRIGUES: Okay.

1           CIA ANALYST #1: Let me say something else  
2 about this eyewitness because I think this is  
3 interesting. He was an important eyewitness to us.  
4 And we asked the FBI to talk to him again, and they  
5 did. In his original description, he thought he had  
6 seen a firework and that perhaps that firework had  
7 originated on the beach behind the house. We went to  
8 that location and realized that if he was only seeing  
9 the airplane, that he would not see a light appear  
10 from behind the rooftop of that house. The light  
11 would actually appear in the sky. It's high enough  
12 in the sky that that would have to happen.

13           When he was reinterviewed, he said that is  
14 indeed what happened. The light did appear in the  
15 sky. Now when the FBI told us that, we got even more  
16 comfortable with our theory. He also described, he  
17 was asked to describe how high in the sky above the  
18 house he thought that light appeared, and he said it  
19 was as if -- if you imagine a flag pole on top of the  
20 house it would be as if it were on the top or the tip  
21 of the flag pole.

22           MR. WALTERS: He's an excellent witness.

1 And my concern is that when all 755 statements are  
2 made available to the public, you and the public will  
3 see numerous statements that appear to be excellent  
4 witnesses that don't agree with him. And I think  
5 part of what this group has to do is address that,  
6 whether we tend to agree or disagree.

7           So if we seem a little skeptical, it's not  
8 because we don't believe that one witness, he was  
9 great. But there's a bunch of them in there that,  
10 from the perspective of trying to legitimately  
11 explain what happened to the airplane, it could be a  
12 problem out in public. That's my comment. The  
13 question is the Boeing aerodynamicist gave you some  
14 indication of what they would expect the airplane to  
15 do aerodynamically with the nose off the front of the  
16 airplane. Did anyone try to explain what the light  
17 might be that the airplane is emitting after the nose  
18 comes off?

19           From a personal point of view, I have  
20 difficulty -- I don't have difficulty with your  
21 analysis, I think it was very well done. I want to  
22 know what it is we're looking at on the airplane

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 that's causing such a bright light that it can be  
2 seen 40 miles away.

3 CIA ANALYST #1: I would think that that  
4 light would be produced by fuel burning in some way.  
5 There was some residual fuel in the center fuel  
6 tank. If an explosion occurred, it's the fumes that  
7 explode. It's not the liquid fuel. If the integrity  
8 of the center tank is ruptured and the fuel is now  
9 dispersed into the air, and it's burning, that could  
10 be a source of that light.

11 MR. WALTERS: It could be. But typically,  
12 a fuel air mixture doesn't burn that way.  
13 Typically. I mean --

14 CIA ANALYST #1: We did not address -- we  
15 left that type of analysis to NTSB, people that are  
16 looking at the plane itself. We're saying this is  
17 where -- the plane was in this location when that  
18 light appeared in the sky.

19 MR. WALTERS: Right.

20 CIA ANALYST #1: That's what our analysis  
21 was.

22 MR. RODRIGUES: To add to that, there's

1 residual fuel, 50 gallons, the airplane's climbing so  
2 it has a nose-up altitude and it has even more of a  
3 nose up altitude now because the nose is off, those  
4 50 gallons to begin with are in the back part of the  
5 tank. The tank exploded and vented forward, the  
6 front part of the tank opened up. But the back part  
7 didn't, at that point. So if this fuel is burning  
8 it's burning in the tank and in a way that would keep  
9 it from being visible, I think. So what's actually  
10 burning is a question that kind of comes up.

11 MR. CAMPBELL: If you don't mind, I'm going  
12 to ask CIA Analyst #1 not to answer that question.

13 MR. LOEB: He's handled it fine. He's  
14 already said that's something he's not going to  
15 analyze.

16 MR. RODRIGUES: We'll have to try and deal  
17 with it.

18 MR. LOEB: I think there is an explanation,  
19 but we will obviously have to deal with that, and  
20 we'll do so, Dennis. But it's not something that  
21 they have done.

22 MR. RODRIGUES: Okay.



1                   CIA ANALYST #1: I'd like to go back to an  
2 earlier question because I think it'll come up  
3 again. You mentioned having, you said, 755  
4 eyewitness reports, many of whom are going to be hard  
5 to explain in the context of our template of what  
6 happened to the plane because they report seeing  
7 something ascend up at a steep angle.

8                   Many of the 244 eyewitnesses that we looked  
9 at are included in that group. We understand that  
10 these eyewitnesses think they saw something ascend at  
11 a steep angle and culminate in an explosion. If that  
12 steep angle preceded immediately a fireball which  
13 then split into two and came down, we are confident  
14 that even though they thought what they saw was  
15 something originating perhaps off the ocean's  
16 surface, streaking up and hitting the plane, that in  
17 fact, what they really saw was a fire trail in the  
18 sky which culminated in the breakup of the plane, two  
19 fireballs.

20                   So what I'm saying is even if we only have  
21 the eyewitnesses that we were looking at, that  
22 question is going to arise. Now it's very possible,

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 since you have many more eyewitness reports than were  
2 given to us by the FBI, that you have some useful  
3 information in your reports that would have been of  
4 value to us if we had had it. We wouldn't know that  
5 until we had had a chance to see the reports.

6 MR. WALTERS: I don't know that we do. I  
7 think some of the witnesses that you got early on are  
8 some of the witnesses that we looked at very  
9 carefully as well.

10 MR. MAYER: And to add to that, many, many,  
11 of the statements that we got, you may have gotten as  
12 well, I don't know. But many of the statements that  
13 we got are extraordinarily brief. I mean, they may  
14 be three or four sentences. And they're maybe  
15 characterized by a witness saw a streak of light  
16 moving upward, and the explosion, and two fireballs  
17 falling to the water. And that probably summarizes  
18 the entire content of a large number of statements.

19 MR. MANNO: And also, some of our witnesses  
20 are late witnesses, too.

21 MR. MAYER: They're what?

22 MR. MANNO: They're late witnesses. Past

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 17, 18.

2 MR. MAYER: They're literally just seeing  
3 smoke rising off the water.

4 MR. MANNO: I mean, when they were  
5 interviewed.

6 MR. LOEB: When they came to our attention.

7 MR. MAYER: That's right.

8 MR. WALTERS: Were you going to add to  
9 that? One of the tasks that we have talked about as  
10 a group that would be nice to have done is a  
11 correlation of data, or a time line between  
12 information from various groups on the investigation,  
13 and you had mentioned that in your analysis. You  
14 looked at the FDR and the CVR determination as a part  
15 of your, quote, time line. And I'm curious --

16 CIA ANALYST #1: That's correct.

17 MR. WALTERS: And maybe the variance is so  
18 slight, maybe it doesn't matter at all. One of the  
19 questions that I don't know was ever answered very  
20 well was exactly when the CVR and the FDR terminated  
21 in relation to what else is going on with the  
22 airplane, and I'm curious that that 1, 2, 5 seconds,

1 you said 4 seconds, when the nose came off might have  
2 been sooner or longer, but was that variation in time  
3 part of your equation in your own time line? Did  
4 you -- was there ever any question to your group when  
5 the CVR and FDR actually ceased? Put it that way.

6 CIA ANALYST #1: We used the cessation time  
7 of the CVR and FDR, and I believe they were within a  
8 quarter second of each other in terms of the time  
9 they went down. We used that to establish where the  
10 plane was when the initial explosion took place,  
11 because we wanted to propagate the sound from that  
12 point. If there's an error in that time, if the  
13 error is several seconds, it will slightly affect the  
14 sound propagation analysis but not very much. And it  
15 will affect it because the location of the plane will  
16 be slightly different. It won't affect it linearly.  
17 In other words, if the plane exploded four seconds  
18 later than we think it did, it won't mean that we're  
19 off in our estimate...

20 MR. WALTERS: By very much at all.

21 CIA ANALYST #1: ... by four seconds from  
22 when the plane exploded to when it hit the water.

1           MR. WALTERS: No, I understand that. Is  
2 that data, I hate to say that, is this -- that data  
3 available? That type of time line work that you did,  
4 is that something we could see? You know, like the  
5 radar. Say, for example, correlating the radar data  
6 with the CVR. That may have been done very early on,  
7 but it was not done with the degree of precision that  
8 perhaps we would like to see done.

9           MR. MAYER: Are you saying the Safety Board  
10 doesn't do it?

11           MR. WALTERS: Well, the Safety Board did a  
12 rough one very early on, as you remember, but I don't  
13 know that that was ever followed up on with any of  
14 the witness stuff or any of what the CIA did to  
15 correlate it all.

16           CIA ANALYST #1: We totally relied on the  
17 work that the Safety Board did on this. It was  
18 provided to us through the FBI.

19           MR. LOEB: And we were working with them at  
20 the time they did this.

21           MR. WALTERS: So it was not an independent  
22 thing, it was done strictly with the board?

1           MR. LOEB: We helped them with the data  
2 that they needed, which included the CVR, FDR, and I  
3 guess you actually got the radar data from us, sir.  
4 Did you get that?

5           CIA ANALYST #1: All of this data was  
6 provided to us by the FBI but the information came  
7 from you. We dealt with them but they passed it on.  
8 They gave us the plot of the radar data; the times  
9 that we have for when the CVR and FDR went down came  
10 from the NTSB via the FBI. That's very important  
11 because we didn't have access, for example, to the  
12 flight data recorder or the cockpit voice recorder.

13           The only information we used out of those  
14 was the time at which they went down and the simple  
15 statement that no -- there was no loud sound recorded  
16 prior to the one right before the recordings ceased.  
17 Those two pieces of information, that's all we used.  
18 Unfortunately, the radar data doesn't tell you  
19 precisely when the plane exploded. Because as you  
20 know, the samples -- the data we've relied on the  
21 most, which was the Riverhead radar, was sampled  
22 every 12 seconds.

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1                   MR. WALTERS: And I wonder if the radar  
2 data even really indicates the initial event you're  
3 making an assumption of, a four-second time for the  
4 nose to come off and the nose may have shown up on  
5 radar. The event itself would not have shown up on  
6 radar, it could have actually been any period of  
7 time, although we know it was much closer than  
8 later.

9                   But --

10                  CIA ANALYST #1: The judgment that the nose  
11 came off within four seconds after the initial  
12 explosion was a conclusion that was totally obtained  
13 from --

14                  MR. LOEB: And our data is not based, as  
15 you know, on one radar. This event was picked up on  
16 more than one --

17                  MR. WALTERS: Right. Once it started to  
18 break up. That's my point is that the CVR and the  
19 FDR don't necessarily correlate exactly with the  
20 radar because the radar doesn't tell you when the  
21 initial event --

22                  MR. LOEB: No. But we have radar from

1 different sources and they're not all precisely  
2 making sweeps at the same time and so you couple that  
3 with the FDR and CVR and we're fairly comfortable  
4 that we have pretty good time line on that. Now,  
5 they didn't have access to all of that when they were  
6 doing this. However, before this presentation was  
7 made, we did, we did talk to CIA Analyst #1, and our  
8 people were helping them and with -- in fact, some of  
9 this very kind of thing to make certain that they  
10 weren't going to be off significantly in their time  
11 line.

12 MR. MAYER: I have a feeling that just as a  
13 personal comment, if you guys were starting your work  
14 from scratch today, you would find absolutely  
15 everything you would need to do the time line work to  
16 do --

17 MR. LOEB: Yeah, they would be in a much  
18 better position.

19 MR. MAYER: And you'd be able to find it  
20 right in our public docket right now.

21 MR. LOEB: They'd be in a much better  
22 position today than they were, but nevertheless,

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550



1 having said that, before this was released we did get  
2 a chance to help them a little bit in terms of trying  
3 to make certain that their timing of events was, in  
4 fact, consistent with ours and ours was based on a  
5 good bit of data.

6 MR. WALTERS: You mentioned that they made  
7 more than one video template or did you just do the  
8 one?

9 CIA ANALYST #1: When you say "video  
10 template" --

11 MR. WALTERS: I was going to ask exactly  
12 what a video template was.

13 CIA ANALYST #1: The still images that you  
14 see behind the animation. In other words --

15 MR. WALTERS: The houses?

16 CIA ANALYST #1: The houses. That's a  
17 single image on which we superimpose an animation.  
18 There's a second case where there's a single image  
19 just looking out over the ocean. This is for the  
20 eyewitness who described the fireball descending to  
21 the surface and then an immediate loud explosion. We  
22 went to right where that eyewitness was standing on a

1 porch, set the camera up and took that still image to  
2 be able to use it in the video because we wanted as  
3 closely as possible to provide reality as a backdrop  
4 for this.

5 Now, unfortunately, as you're aware, a lot  
6 of people also assume that we have precise knowledge  
7 of exactly how the plane came apart as we made this  
8 video. Of course we do not have that. We did our  
9 best to animate things in the video to illustrate key  
10 events that were important to understand what the  
11 eyewitnesses had seen.

12 MR. WALTERS: Okay. So the video templates  
13 that you used, that you did are all represented  
14 here? Or were there some that you did that didn't  
15 make the final edit, say?

16 CIA ANALYST #1: We didn't make any  
17 templates to use as a backdrop that we didn't use  
18 because we already knew when we went out on our trip  
19 to Calverton to get those images, we knew what --

20 MR. WALTERS: What you wanted to --

21 CIA ANALYST #1: -- what the video was  
22 going to look like.

1 MR. WALTERS: Gotcha.

2 MR. YOUNG: CIA Analyst #1, who made the  
3 determination? I assume it was the FBI, but maybe my  
4 assumption is incorrect. But who determined when and  
5 how many of the witness statements you got? Was it  
6 the FBI alone?

7 CIA ANALYST #1: The FBI provided us  
8 eyewitness statements over a period of time.  
9 Primarily, they were providing us witness statements  
10 that would be descriptions that may be consistent  
11 with this being a missile, because that's what they  
12 wanted us to be looking at. We made the case that  
13 it's very important to have all the eyewitness  
14 reports possible so that we could go about doing a  
15 full analysis. And the example that I used earlier  
16 I'll use again: Some very important eyewitnesses  
17 clearly did not see anything that would be construed  
18 as being a missile, but they helped us make a case  
19 that none of these eyewitnesses saw a missile.

20 MR. YOUNG: But then --

21 DD/CIA/OTI: It's the FBI that gave us the  
22 statements.

1 MR. YOUNG: FBI was the actual.

2 DD/CIA/OTI: We dealt with the FBI.

3 MR. YOUNG: And did they ever tell you  
4 what -- I know they were looking specifically at a  
5 missile. Did they ever determine what determining  
6 factor -- was it more detail, less detail, or one was  
7 here? Was there any sort of distribution that they  
8 worried about or anything like that?

9 CIA ANALYST #1: No, there was not.

10 MR. YOUNG: I'll ask one question and it's  
11 only an opinion from you. I take it that it's been  
12 said that you cooperated with the board and the FBI  
13 and that you had access to the basically all the same  
14 information and the two videos are somewhat  
15 different. And I'm asking you for an opinion on  
16 that, I guess.

17 MR. MAYER: Can you provide some specific  
18 examples or instances?

19 MR. YOUNG: Well, your video shows about a  
20 3000-foot ascent and the other video is about half of  
21 that or less.

22 CIA ANALYST #1: A lot of people talk about

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 that as a difference between our analyses. I have to  
2 tell you when we saw how similar our results were --  
3 the fact that we did these animations independent of  
4 each other -- we were very pleased. Both had the  
5 aircraft ascending to some degree. I think the NTSB  
6 had the plane turning to the left a little bit, which  
7 is one of the reasons why it didn't ascend as high as  
8 our model did.

9           The bottom line here is we were content  
10 with the way -- with the similarities between the two  
11 animations. We also went back and looked at what the  
12 key eyewitness would have seen with the two  
13 animations. And because the NTSB's model has the  
14 plane turning to the left, that compensates... It  
15 doesn't have to go as high in the sky to create the  
16 same --

17           MR. LOEB: Timing.

18           CIA ANALYST #1: -- illusion to the  
19 eyewitness.

20           So what the eyewitness would have seen as  
21 far as the two animations go is very, very close to  
22 the same even though the two models have the plane

1 going at slightly different altitudes. I know -- I  
2 guess I'll say this again, and you folks have gone  
3 back to it several times -- there's a lot of concern  
4 about what happened to that plane in the first few  
5 seconds after the initial explosion. What happened  
6 to the plane in the first few seconds after the  
7 initial explosion has very little to do with  
8 explaining the vast majority of the eyewitness  
9 statements.

10 MR. YOUNG: And to echo what Jim says, of  
11 course, your problem is going to be is that we have  
12 seen a few more than you have and we do have to look  
13 at some of the -- and some of the witnesses seem to  
14 be very precise about a white light ascending from a  
15 surface towards -- and that's why we keep bringing up  
16 this question because it's going to be a question we  
17 have to answer.

18 CIA ANALYST #1: We had eyewitnesses in our  
19 group that said the same thing. Again, I would  
20 suggest if you can, as you're trying to interpret  
21 your 755 eyewitness reports, to try to get  
22 references, things that you can use to peg what part

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 of this the witnesses see. It's very important.

2 MR. RODRIGUES: And you're right. And I  
3 think what we're trying to do is try and understand  
4 that part of it where this is probably what started  
5 everything was people saying a streak of light going  
6 up. And so that's what we're trying to understand.  
7 And the witnesses we used, I guess you used one or  
8 two witnesses, the one on the bridge as a prime, but  
9 the question in our minds is what are the rest of the  
10 people seeing, if it's a later event like you're  
11 saying. I mean, what are they physically seeing  
12 ascending?

13 CIA ANALYST #1: Right.

14 MR. RODRIGUES: Do you have a thought on  
15 that?

16 CIA ANALYST #1: It's not important what  
17 our opinion would be on that. We've speculated about  
18 that sort of thing among ourselves. It's not  
19 important in terms of interpreting whether or not a  
20 missile was involved. It's fire. It's probably  
21 burning fuel.

22 MR. RODRIGUES: That's what we're trying to

1 understand. Setting a missile aside.

2 MR. LOEB: Again, I think you're asking  
3 them something that they haven't done, they  
4 haven't -- worked on. They cannot answer the  
5 questions. I think CIA Analyst #1 was very clear  
6 about that earlier. And so I think that's left for  
7 us -- in the end, that's going to be something the  
8 Board has to grapple with, Dennis, in its own  
9 analysis. So.

10 MR. RODRIGUES: The reason I raise it is  
11 because when this was done, I figured maybe that came  
12 up as an obvious question. And if it was pursued.

13 MR. LOEB: I think he's answered -- I think  
14 he's answered that and I don't know that they need  
15 to --

16 CIA ANALYST #1: If an eyewitness describes  
17 a streak of light that culminates in an explosion and  
18 then immediately you have two fireballs drop to the  
19 surface, we're confident that that streak of light  
20 was the burning airplane. Now, your question is why  
21 did some eyewitnesses describe that streak of light  
22 as something that ascends right off the ocean's



1 surface. We don't know why they described it that  
2 way. We are confident what they are seeing is the  
3 burning aircraft and only the burning aircraft. And  
4 when I say "burning aircraft," I include fuel  
5 trailing from the -- what you see is burning fuel,  
6 not the plane burning itself.

7 MR. WALTERS: At the risk of asking you a  
8 really stupid question which we all know the answers  
9 to, I need to ask it anyway, and that is because of  
10 the organization that you're affiliated with. Could  
11 there have been or would there have been any assets  
12 used that we would not be aware of that in some way  
13 that you could tell us were used that we don't need  
14 to know about?

15 CIA ANALYST #1: The closest...

16 MR. CAMPBELL: Assets used in the analysis.

17 MR. WALTERS: In developing the video.

18 I'll keep it pretty tight there.

19 CIA ANALYST #1: ... there is, and it's  
20 referred to in the video, is the satellite which  
21 detected infrared data -- heat from this disaster.  
22 We used that information. It was peripheral to the

1 work that we did. The fact that that happened is not  
2 classified. I couldn't go into the details of how  
3 that particular collector works.

4 MR. WALTERS: I don't even want to know.

5 CIA ANALYST #1: You wouldn't need to know,  
6 it wouldn't affect your -- I don't think it would  
7 affect your --

8 DD/CIA/OTI: But the answer to the question  
9 is everything that we -- you've got everything we  
10 have. There's nothing else out there, you know, some  
11 super secret sensor or something?

12 MR. WALTERS: I wouldn't have expected a  
13 different answer.

14 CIA ANALYST #1: And apparently you have  
15 about 500 witness reports that we don't have.

16 MR. WALTERS: I can't leave the room  
17 without asking the question.

18 DD/CIA/OTI: We understand.

19 MR. YOUNG: CIA Analyst #1, could I ask a  
20 hypothetical question.

21 CIA ANALYST #1: Sure.

22 MR. YOUNG: Should an overhead image or

1 system been available to see that, I'm just curious,  
2 do you think it would have detected any?

3 MR. LOEB: If you can't comment, don't  
4 comment.

5 CIA ANALYST #1: It's "no comment" to  
6 that. I'll give you a sense for how some of the work  
7 we do is misinterpreted. You may be aware of a  
8 Newsweek article that came out after the FBI closed  
9 the criminal investigation and released this tape to  
10 the public. There's a news writer that assumed that  
11 those images, the animated images that you saw in  
12 that video, were obtained from a satellite.

13 MR. YOUNG: I wouldn't have expect -- I  
14 would have expected it would have been much better  
15 than that.

16 CIA ANALYST #1: Didn't happen.

17 MR. WALTERS: Did any other agency like ATF  
18 have any input into this video?

19 CIA ANALYST #1: No, our only sources of  
20 information for this video was information that we  
21 obtained from the FBI. It was either FBI  
22 information, the 302 reports, or information they had

1 obtained from the NTSB.

2 DD/CIA/OTI: Information that was given to  
3 us.

4 MR. WALTERS: There was, again -- well,  
5 that would have been FBI interviews. There were at  
6 least two gentleman there that were working with the  
7 FBI and a Missile and Space Intelligence Center  
8 analyst and I assume that any work he did, those  
9 witness statements were all included as part of the  
10 302s then.

11 CIA ANALYST #1: I'm sorry. Could you  
12 repeat that question, please?

13 MR. WALTERS: There were two gentlemen that  
14 were involved in some of the questioning of certain  
15 witnesses, at least one of whom was attached to the  
16 missile --

17 CIA ANALYST #1: Missile and Space  
18 Intelligence Center.

19 MR. WALTERS: That's the guy a Missile and  
20 Space Intelligence Center analyst, and I'm just  
21 curious if that was a separate interview process or  
22 was that done as part of the 302s, and is that how we

1 have access to that information?

2 CIA ANALYST #1: The 302s provided to us  
3 very often would give a list of names of people that  
4 participated in the interviews. These would include  
5 the special agents and in several instances, the  
6 representatives from the Missile and Space  
7 Intelligence Center by name. They would be in the  
8 room together as they interviewed eyewitnesses.

9 MR. MAYER: Did the work of the Missile and  
10 Space Intelligence Center, separate from the FBI,  
11 produce any information that you got that was used in  
12 your work I think is the question that Jim's trying  
13 to ask.

14 CIA ANALYST #1: No, it did not.

15 MR. MAYER: Your input for this analysis  
16 came from the FBI witness files.

17 CIA ANALYST #1: Right. My counsel has  
18 given me permission to speculate a little bit on what  
19 eyewitnesses who describe something in the sky  
20 ascending may have seen, even though we think that  
21 what they are seeing at the time is something that is  
22 descending. I don't have this on a Vugraph. What I

1 have here is a photograph of several fireworks that  
2 were fired from behind the governor's mansion in  
3 Williamsburg. And if you look at this picture, and  
4 if I tell you those are fireworks, you would think it  
5 reasonable that the firework starts here right above  
6 the roof of the governor's mansion and ascends into  
7 the sky. It's going up. If I told you, it looks  
8 like a firework but it's not a firework, what you're  
9 seeing here is a meteor going through the sky  
10 approaching you from a distance and getting closer  
11 and closer to you and appearing to rise in the sky,  
12 even though we know that meteor is descending in  
13 altitude, you also get an image that would look like  
14 this.

15 I think what may have happened is some  
16 eyewitnesses are seeing something move through the  
17 sky and their brain is thinking, "I'm looking at a  
18 firework. The firework came from the surface." And  
19 as soon as they register it that way, they start to  
20 interpret what they're seeing from that point on.  
21 It's important to realize that these eyewitnesses  
22 are, in general, 10 or more miles away from what's

**ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.**

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 happening. At 10 or more miles away, your eyesight  
2 doesn't give you an ability to perceive depth.  
3 You're seeing a two-dimensional image in the sky.  
4 And you're inferring depth from experience. Now  
5 that's speculation. It doesn't affect -- if what I  
6 just told you turned out not to be what those  
7 eyewitnesses saw, it would not at all affect our  
8 conclusion that they're seeing only the latter stages  
9 of the disaster.

10 MR. YOUNG: CIA Analyst #1, without getting  
11 into anything classified, again, should someone have  
12 seen, not necessarily here, but should someone see a  
13 launch from the surface into the sky of a device such  
14 as some people speculate, what differences would you  
15 think they would have seen? In other words, if it  
16 was a Stinger or something like that, would there  
17 have been specific differences that you can call out  
18 based on what they saw?

19 MR. CAMPBELL: That's -- again, that's  
20 another question if you guys worked on, that would be  
21 one thing. Otherwise I think we would want to  
22 qualify an expert on that.

1           CIA ANALYST #1: I can say this, because it  
2 was something we looked at. Like I say, when we  
3 started this analysis we didn't start it with any  
4 preconceived notions about what the eyewitnesses had  
5 seen. We understood that if the eyewitnesses had  
6 seen a missile attack the plane, because they're  
7 seeing this from a lot of different locations, it's  
8 going to look different to each of them. And we were  
9 hoping that if indeed it turned out that they were  
10 witnessing a missile attack, we would be able to use  
11 their descriptions to determine the location from  
12 where that missile was launched.

13           When you go through and proceed with that  
14 analysis, you arrive at the conclusion that what  
15 they're seeing is only the plane.

16           I think you will find this as you look at  
17 your 755 eyewitness reports. Even though you've got  
18 a lot of people that are describing something ascend  
19 up vertically, as an example, a lot of eyewitnesses  
20 think that this is a lot closer to them than we know  
21 it is. And by "a lot closer to them" I mean the  
22 fireball itself. The eyewitness on the bridge, he

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550



1 thinks that the firework that he is seeing originates  
2 on the beach. The beach is about a quarter mile from  
3 where he is standing. He thinks the fireball that he  
4 sees in the sky is a half mile from where he stands.  
5 So another quarter mile out off the shore. In  
6 reality, it's 11 miles away.

7 This happens again and again. What it  
8 brings home to me is that there was a tremendous  
9 amount of fuel in the sky. It was unfathomable to a  
10 lot of people that this could be 10 miles away. It's  
11 so big that I think they interpreted it as being much  
12 closer than it really was.

13 MR. YOUNG: Okay.

14 MR. WALTERS: You said that you had pretty  
15 much reached your conclusions by early February; is  
16 that correct?

17 CIA ANALYST #1: The conclusion that the  
18 eyewitnesses were only seeing the burning aircraft  
19 was made at 10:00 p.m. at night on the 30th of  
20 December 1996.

21 MR. WALTERS: Was it really?

22 CIA ANALYST #1: Yes, as I was sitting

1 behind the computer. It's -- up until then, what  
2 we're doing is trying to interpret these reports the  
3 way you are now. If it's a streak, where is the  
4 streak originating from? What external source could  
5 there be for the streak? There was a realization,  
6 having all the data laid out, that you can explain  
7 what the eyewitnesses are seeing with only the  
8 burning aircraft.

9 MR. WALTERS: So it was March then before  
10 the FBI or until you briefed --

11 CIA ANALYST #1: CIA Analyst #2 said  
12 something which is a good point. CIA Analyst #2 said  
13 there are other issues. Once you think you have an  
14 answer you have a lot of eyewitness reports. You  
15 have to go back through all of them. What we ended  
16 up doing then was placing very carefully all the  
17 eyewitness reports we were getting, and were  
18 continuing to get, on the mapping software.

19 Also, I immediately alerted, I called --  
20 the next morning I called the special agents I worked  
21 with at the FBI and explained what we were thinking.  
22 Because I wanted to make sure that -- even though at

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 that point it's a conclusion, we don't have it fully  
2 documented. We wanted them to be aware of this so  
3 that they could start proceeding with the  
4 investigation and having that initial piece of  
5 information.

6 MR. WALTERS: A personal note, has nothing  
7 to do with anything else. It's a little annoying  
8 that it took them a year to decide to go along with  
9 your program.

10 MR. YOUNG: CIA Analyst #1, is this the  
11 only time you've ever been asked to perform this sort  
12 of analysis on a civilian type thing like this? In  
13 other words, did you do something on the Challenger,  
14 for instance?

15 CIA ANALYST #1: No. I've got about 27  
16 years experience doing analysis on problems, believe  
17 it or not, that we would often consider more  
18 challenging than this in the sense that we have less  
19 data to work with, and less ability to corroborate  
20 our theories.

21 The nice thing about this as a technical  
22 problem is that you have lots of checks and

1 balances. You have radar data, you have  
2 eyewitnesses. Lots of eyewitnesses. You've got  
3 something we didn't get into in this discussion so  
4 far but remember you have an eyewitness on a plane,  
5 on a USAir flight who describes seeing an airplane  
6 fly below him about 10 seconds before he sees this  
7 light appear in the sky. Now you can go back and use  
8 the radar data and indeed there is a plane that flies  
9 below him.

10 And 10 seconds after... 12 seconds after  
11 that happens, Flight 800 explodes. And it explodes  
12 in a part of the sky where he says he sees this white  
13 light appear. So now you have an independent  
14 corroboration with the guy on the bridge. I think  
15 this gentleman upon USAir Flight 217 is another  
16 excellent eyewitness in that he saw things happen  
17 near the very beginning.

18 MR. YOUNG: Actually, we had two witnesses  
19 on that airplane.

20 CIA ANALYST #1: That's correct.

21 MR. YOUNG: But curiously you mention the  
22 airplane. Do you know what airplane he saw pass

1 under?

2 CIA ANALYST #1: We think it's a P-3 and we  
3 think the P-3 was at an altitude of about 20,000 feet  
4 and the USAir was at an altitude of 21,700 feet. And  
5 you're correct, he was sitting in seat 5-F on the  
6 right-hand side of the plane and behind him was  
7 another eyewitness, in seat 6-F.

8 MR. MAYER: Not that you have a clear  
9 memory of --

10 CIA ANALYST #1: It's been a year ago, I'm  
11 sorry.

12 MR. YOUNG: You didn't review any of this  
13 before you came.

14 CIA ANALYST #1: Some of these -- as you're  
15 very aware, after you spend a long time -- we spent a  
16 year looking at these. I suspect 20 years from now  
17 I'm going to remember some of those details, as you  
18 will.

19 MR. YOUNG: I'd just like to say on behalf  
20 of my company, I appreciate very much that you've  
21 even taken the time to talk to us. I know most  
22 people think that I'll disappear now.

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550

1 MR. LOEB: That's part of the package, Bob.

2 CIA ANALYST #1: You're most welcome. We  
3 appreciate the opportunity.

4 MR. WALTERS: I'd like to thank Bernie for  
5 making it work, too. I know this could not have been  
6 easy to make all this happen between the  
7 organizations.

8 MR. LOEB: Actually, the thanks belong to  
9 David and also to Peter.

10 (Whereupon, at 12:00 p.m., the briefing was  
11 concluded.)

12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Nationwide Coverage

202-347-3700

800-336-6646

410-684-2550